

THE BEACON

FOR SCHOOL AND HOME

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The Pony of Mystery.

BY ARTHUR WALLACE PEACH.

MARK, hearing a carriage turn into the yard, hurried out, and found his father driving in and leading a small, oddly marked pony.

After greeting his father, Mark asked: "Where did you get that pony, father? He's a queer-looking beast!"

"Oh, I bought him over the mountains," Mr. Stetson answered, smiling in his quiet way. "He is queer-looking, but I guess he'll do for our purposes."

As the days went by, Mark and the pony became good friends. He was good-tempered and full of little tricks that showed he had been petted much in other days; but he remained to Mark a pony of mystery, for his father would say no more about the pony other than to remark that he was what is called a "calico" pony because of his peculiar markings.

About a week later a curious thing happened.

Mark was on his way to the barn when he heard voices. His father was talking with a stranger, and the latter was saying, "I'll agree to work for you a year, for two years, if you'll let me have the pony!"

Mr. Stetson answered in a curt voice: "But I bought the pony fairly; he belongs to me, and I intend to keep him. I really haven't any use for you around the place; so I could not think of hiring you."

Some one was evidently very anxious to purchase the pony, and Mark smiled to himself with joy when he heard his father's refusal. Not wishing to be an eavesdropper, Mark went on; but his curiosity was thoroughly aroused, for it did seem unusual that a man would be willing to work for two years in order to buy a pony.

Mark ventured to ask his father about the matter, but he got no information that would clear the mystery.

The next day Mark and his father started to town, and the pony was walking around a curve in the road, when, to the utter astonishment of Mark and Mr. Stetson, the pony calmly stopped and began to back steadily. Mr. Stetson yelled at him, but the pony kept on backing.

Mark, clinging to the carriage seat, shouted to his father, "Why, Dad, he's trying to sit down!"

That was just what the pony seemed to be trying to do, and he kept on trying until he had broken a thill.

When finally things were straightened out, the would-be travelers to town went back to the farm. There Mr. Stetson, determination in his eyes, immediately hitched the pony into the buggy, and they started back.

This time, the pony went on without trouble resulting, and they reached town. There, however, with a hundred people looking on, the pony again went through his peculiar antic and tried to sit down.

Once more Mark and his father fixed up a tear in the harness, and they turned toward home. The pony trotted merrily along as if nothing had happened that was unusual.



asked, and then added, "I s'pose you know about the pony?"

Mark shook his head, and asked the other to explain.

"The facts are these," the stranger said slowly: "I think more o' that pony than I do of anybody else on this earth. He's been a friend o' mine for years, ever since he was a little colt. We've traveled and bunked together for five years, and I just hate to give him up!"

"Give him up?" Mark said in astonishment. "Didn't you sell him to father?"

The man laughed a little bitterly. "Sell him? Well, I guess not! Somebody else sold him to your father; and I've tramped clear across this state to see if I couldn't get him back again and failed."

Mark asked more questions, and the other answered; and as Mark listened, some of the mystery began to be cleared up.

"You see," the man said, "I was with Williams' Circus, a little one-ring affair, but a fair show. Williams died over in Orleans County; his pardner skipped with what money there was left; then the show was seized and sold at auction to pay for feed and other things—I don't know what. I know just this: Williams had got me to sign the pony over to him—said it would be safer for me and him since we went through states with different laws. I don't know anything about the laws, so I did what he asked. He paid me a fair salary, and the pony and I did some tricks that!"

"Why, it's a trick pony—a circus pony!" Mark almost shouted in his astonishment.



THE WORK SHOP.

"That's it," the man answered, and his face brightened as he added, "He's the best little chap in the ring, too!" Then he went on sadly: "I was trying to raise some money to get the pony and myself away. When I came back, the pony was gone—sold to your dad at the sale. Then I started out across the state to here. I got here, but your father wouldn't sell him. I—I guess I've got to give him up."

The man's face seemed to stiffen, and Mark saw tears in his eyes.

Mark was touched. "Now, that's too bad. Perhaps we can fix it up. Come to the house, and we'll see father."

If Mr. Stetson was ever astonished, it was when he saw Mark approaching with the dusty stranger.

When Mark finished his plea, his father said in his blunt way: "I paid one hundred dollars for the pony. I can't afford to throw the money away. This man has no money to pay!"

"But I'll pay you back! I will, sir, I promise you!" the man exclaimed eagerly.

Mr. Stetson sat in thought. His face suddenly grew hard. "Have you been around here since your first talk with me?"

The man's head drooped. "Yes, sir, I have. I'll tell you just what I have been doing, for I see you have guessed it. I wanted the pony; I didn't want to steal him, but I thought if I could make you tired of him, you might let him go. He's a trick pony, and I've taught him to do tricks on signals that people don't catch unless they know what the signals are. I made him sit up in the road to-day; I was hiding in the bushes and waiting for you. While you were in town, I made him do stunts by signaling to him from the sidewalk in the crowd. I'm sorry, now, sir. I've made up my mind that you paid for him fairly, and he's yours; and so—so—I came here to-night to say—to say good-by to the 'Boy'—that's what I call him, sir."

Mr. Stetson's stern face had softened. "I see, I had a horse once that I!"—He stopped short. "Well, you can have the pony, if you, Mark, will accept this man's promise to pay you; and if he doesn't pay you, you pay me the hundred dollars."

Mark had three hundred dollars in the bank—money he had saved by hard work, but he hesitated only for a moment.

"I'll take his note, father," he said quietly, and turning to the stranger he said, "You can take your pony."

Tears of joy trickled down the man's dusty face as he shook Mark's hand.

Six months later the money in payment came from Judson, for that was the man's name, and to the money had been added interest at six per cent. Mark showed the money to his father, and his father smiled his rare smile.

"Son, I'm glad to see you have faith in men. I didn't have faith in him until he made me see how much he thought of his pony. I should never have made you pay the hundred dollars; but I did want to see if you were really enough in earnest in your belief in Judson to make you stake your money on his promise. I'm glad to see you had faith."

In Mark's room is a large photograph of a pony that looks very wise, and by the pony stands a man with a happy, smiling face. Beneath the picture is written in a broad, crude hand—"Always your friends, Judson and the Boy."

April.

APRIL cold with dropping rain
Willows and lilacs brings again,
The whistle of returning birds,
And trumpet lowing of the herds.
The scarlet maple keys betray
What potent blood hath modest May,
What fiery force the earth renews,
The wealth of forms, the flush of hues;
What joy in rosy waves outpoured
Flows from the heart of Love, the Lord.

EMERSON.

Securing a Position.

BY NELLIE F. MILBURN.

FRANK B. on his way to and from school daily passed a large jewelry and music store, which was the handsomest and most attractive establishment in the town. He had an artistic bent and natural taste for beauty and often paused to gaze in the windows and admire the brilliant array of jewels, the shining silverware and sparkling cut-glass, and with the fervid imagination of a boy dreamed that some day he would own a store like this himself.

When he was graduated from high school at the age of seventeen, he went to the jewelry store and, finding the proprietor at leisure, somewhat bashfully asked for employment, saying tactfully that he was willing to do any kind of work. The merchant looked at the handsome, well-dressed boy and kindly stated: "No, Frank, it is impossible. I have all the help I need. My two clerks have been with me for several years and are perfectly satisfactory."

"Well, if you ever do need more help, won't you please remember me, Mr. Graham?" persisted the boy.

"It would be wrong for me to hold out any hopes, Frank," he answered firmly and decisively. "I have two boys of my own who will come into the business some day. In fact, John expects to work here during the summer vacation."

It was not until he had left Mr. Graham and was at home again that Frank realized how bitterly he was disappointed. There had been no reason why he should have expected to obtain a position in Mr. Graham's store, and yet with the impulsive confidence of youth he had dreamed and planned for it.

After a little reflection, however, Frank decided that as a mercantile life was what he desired, the best plan was to apply at some other shops for employment. He went from one business establishment to another, but found no opening.

He had an acquaintance, Tom C., who kept a small candy and fruit store near the railroad depot, and in his walks about town Frank often stopped in and sought Tom's advice. He talked matters over with Tom. "I've made up my mind to take the first situation that I can get in order to gain experience," he declared. "I'll do the best I can, no matter if I don't like the job," he added, growing more humble as the days passed by. Finally at the end of a week, Tom said to him: "Frank, I've a proposition to make to you. Now that the ice-cream season is coming on, I will need help at the soda fountain. Last summer I hired a twelve-year-old boy, but he was childish and unreliable. If you are willing to take the place until something better turns up, it is yours. But I can only pay a couple of dollars a week

and you will have to be here every night until nine or ten o'clock."

"That's lots better than loafing," was Frank's instant reply.

The next morning he was on hand at an early hour to take down the shutters, sweep and dust. The store was a tiny, crowded room, scarcely bigger than a dry-goods box.

For a few days Frank quietly watched Tom and listened to his directions and carefully looked over the stock. Then he asked permission to clean the glass showcases.

He first sorted over the boxes of candy and suggested that the stale candy be mixed and sold off at a bargain price. He washed the glass, polished the silvered molding, and arranged the goods tastefully. This was such an improvement that he was given a free hand and went over all the shelves in the same careful, painstaking way, and lastly washed the front window and arranged an attractive and striking display.

Every one commented on the neat and improved appearance of the store and Frank felt a just pride in his work.

As a clerk he was apt and obliging, and "drew customers" as merchants say. The fact is, his persevering search for work had advertised him in the community, and his acquaintances stopped in to see him and incidentally bought soda water.

As the summer passed and winter came on, the soda and ice-cream business fell off and Frank realized that he must look for another position.

One day, greatly to his surprise, he received a note from Mr. Graham, asking him to call. Of course Frank hurried to the jewelry establishment at the first opportunity.

Mr. Graham greeted him cordially.

"Frank, my boy, I've been watching you. Did you know that?"

"Why, no, Mr. Graham. I have noticed that you came in several times, but I didn't know you were keeping an eye on me," he laughed.

"Yes, I happened to go past Tom's place early one morning on my way to the train, and I saw you scrubbing the floor. We have had so much trouble with our janitor that it occurred to me if you are willing to do the cleaning, I might make an offer to you. I think, too, that you have genuine taste in making a window display. I thought I had no place for you, but I see that you can make a place for yourself. I'll give you six dollars a week to begin on." Frank was highly pleased, and the details were easily arranged.

As he lived near this store, Frank arose at five o'clock, hurried to the building and cleaned the store, then went home, had his breakfast and dressed himself neatly for his duties as clerk, and was back again at eight o'clock.

He soon built up a reputation as a window trimmer and his accurate taste led the merchant to send him frequently to a large city near by to select and buy goods.

He remained with Mr. Graham several years and then through his acquaintance with wholesale houses was offered a well paying position in a large establishment in Chicago.

He is still a young man, but is junior partner and manager of a flourishing business.

More near than we think,—very close at hand

Lie the golden fields of Sunshine Land.

EDITH M. THOMAS.

A Scientific Grandpapa.

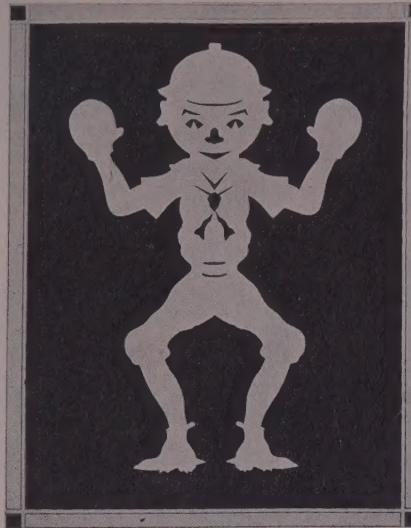
"SEE, grandpapa, my flower!" she cried.
"I found it in the grasses!"
And, with a kindly smile, the Sage
Surveyed it through his glasses.

"Ah, yes," he said, "involucrate,
And all the florets ligulate,
Corolla gamopetalous—
Compositæ—exogenous—
A pretty specimen it is,
Taraxacum dens-leonis!"

She took the blossom back again,
His face her wistful eye on.

"I thought," she said with quivering lip,
"It was a dandelion!"

—St. Nicholas.



Dicky the Brave.

BY ABBIE FARWELL BROWN.

"WOOF!" barked Dicky joyously as he saw his mistress coming out of the house with her hat on and her stick in hand. "Yes, it is time for our walk. How slow you are! Woof! I will take you up to the dark woods where we have never gone together. Woof! Woof!"

Dicky had been waiting around all day for this happy moment. He did so love a ramble! Why the little dog did not go to walk by himself his mistress could not guess. There lay the woods and fields all ready, and Dicky could trot out at any time; for he had no engagements nor duties to keep him at home, as she had. But there he had sat patiently since breakfast, watching the door for her to appear in her walking hat.

"Woof! Hurrah!" he barked, jumping on her and whirling about in the wildest joy, his long ears flapping and his feathery tail threatening to wag itself off. "Here we go to the dark woods! There may be bears and wolves and horrid big creatures there to eat you up. But I will take care of you, never fear!"

Dicky's mistress did not care where she went. So when the little dog trotted towards the mountain she followed leisurely. "Hurrah!" exulted Dicky. "Now we are really going! I have always wanted to see what was up there. They say something big and fierce lives in those woods; something that creeps out every night and steals a chicken from the farm and carries it away to its den among the rocks. It is not a fox, they say, nor a woodchuck, nor a weasel. Oh, Mistress, let us go and find out what it is!" And he frisked ahead of her with bristling hair and eyes shining with excitement. Some of Dicky's ancestors had been hunters.

Dicky's mistress was thinking of something else. She had not heard about the fate of the poor chickens at the farm. She did not know about the Outlaw creature that lurked in the woods. She was not afraid to go anywhere with Dicky to take care of her.

They crossed the meadow, climbed the hill, and entered the woods. The trees grew thick and the path was narrow and hard to follow. Dicky made no pretense of keeping to it, but scurried hither and thither through the underbrush, chasing sights and sounds and smells that tempted him. But he came back in a great circle every few minutes to be sure that his lady had not turned on her tracks, as she sometimes did, too soon to suit his idea of a proper long walk. She kept to the path, as human creatures do;

"I saw something!" he said to himself, quivering. "I certainly saw something big and dark go into that hole. It has a den there! It was not a squirrel, nor a woodchuck, nor a fox. It was black and it had green eyes! I know it was something wild and wicked. Woof! I must take care of my mistress. Woof! The hour has come!"

Dicky darted towards the den. His mistress heard a scratch and a scramble; she heard strange sounds of scuffling and snarling, and she stopped her walk. What had Dicky found? The snarls and scuffling continued. There arose howls and strange squeals, as if some creature was in pain. The lady began to be nervous. She turned in the path and made ready to run.

The howls and growlings grew louder. Suddenly, out of the hole in the rocks came something big and noisy. It darted straight towards her, making terrible sounds, and with a scream she ran. The creature gained on her. There was a horrible yell and a howl. It passed her,—and she saw what it was. Dicky with staring eyes was running for his life towards home, and on his back was a huge black cat, clawing him most wickedly. The lady picked up a stick and rushed forward with a cry. At that the monster gave one last yell and, leaping into the air, fled back to his den, leaving Dicky scratched and whining at his mistress' feet.

"I thought it was only a bear!" he sniveled, "but it was the *Wild Cat!*"

The Outlaw creature was a Wild Cat,—not a wildcat, which is a very different thing. A Wild Cat is worse; for it knows all about dogs and farms and people, since it once lived tame among them and learned their secrets. Now this one—the traitor!—had its robber castle in the woods near the home from which it had run away, and preyed upon the creatures which still lived there in domestic quiet. It was a villainous Beast; no wonder Dicky's hair rose in horror at it.

"Good dog, Dicky, poor fellow!" said his mistress, stooping to pat his head. "I shall have to do you up in vaseline."

Her voice brought all his courage back. He rose, looking about defiantly. "Woof! The Beast is gone!" he barked. "Do not be afraid, Mistress, I will take care of you. You are quite safe with me even in these woods full of dangers. See! I have driven the Thing away. Woof! Woof!"

With proud tail erect, Dicky led the way home; but this time he limped close to his lady. She was still in such danger!

Trailing Arbutus.

BY DAISY D. STEPHENSON.

ERE the snow-drifts retreat
From the sun's boldest beams,
Ere the troubadours' fleet
Summon blossoms from dreams,
Ere the brooks burst their bars
And rejoicingly run,
Then the wee woodland stars
Ope their eyes, one by one.
Faintly flushed like the morn,
'Mid the leaves nestled deep,
Nature's breast they adorn,
As she wakes from her sleep.

If you are unhappy, it is probably because you have so many thoughts about yourself and so few about the happiness of others.

MARY LYON.

Scissors Folk.

BY WILLIAM LUDLUM, JR.

THE BALL PLAYER.

'TIS he has made a nation's fame;
To "fans" and "rooters" given name;
In daily papers gets more space
Than all the rest of human race.

stopping now and then to pick a flower or to poke in the moss or to stare up at a bird. Dicky wondered what fun it could be to walk like that—never darting into the bushes after a squirrel, never thrusting nose into suspicious holes under tree-trunks that might hold something alive that would run or wriggle when one chased it. What fun! The wild woods seem made for little dogs to race in.

Dicky had not forgotten the Outlaw creature that lived in these same woods. Every now and then he paused with paw uplifted, and his eyes grew big and round. With bristling hair he sniffed and gave a short, sharp bark. It seemed to him that he scented the neighborhood of some enemy. Each time he was aware of this, he ran up to the lady and looked in her face to see what she thought about it. But she looked quite unconscious. She did not know the danger that lurked near. Dicky felt a delicious thrill of pride. "I will take care of her," he thought, "whatever happens."

The woods grew thicker. The lady could hardly find any path to follow. They were on the mountain side, climbing always upward. Great rocks lay tumbled here and there, sometimes piled in heaps where they had rolled down the mountain. It was just the place for an Outlaw to have his den. Dicky knew that bears had been seen upon the mountain. He pricked up his ears and spied eagerly about. Ha! There was a rustle. He pounced upon it with a snarl. Quick! Up the tree went a flash of red; it was only a squirrel! Dicky hung his head. Well, that time it was a mistake,—but wait! The lady was humming a little song as she walked. How strange it was that she did not know they were in the midst of alarms!

Suddenly Dicky's eyes sharpened upon a spot among the rocks. His legs stiffened and his crinkly black hair rose on his fat little body.



THE BEACON CLUB



OUR PURPOSE: Helpfulness.

OUR MOTTO: Let your light shine.

OUR BADGE: The Beacon Club Button.

Writing a letter for this corner makes you a member of the Beacon Club. Address, The Beacon Club, 25 Beacon Street, Boston.

NASHUA, N.H.,
27 Prescott Street.

Dear Miss Buck,—I go to the Unitarian church of Nashua, and remember when you spoke to our Sunday school.

There are nine girls in my class and one of them is a member of the Beacon Club. I receive *The Beacon* every Sunday, and enjoy it very much. I should like to belong to the Beacon Club.

Your friend,

ELIZABETH TOLLES.

DETROIT, MICH.,
94 Burlingame Avenue.

Dear Miss Buck,—I am a member of the First Unitarian Sunday School of Detroit. My teacher is Mr. Shaw. My brother, Roger, also goes to Sunday school. We are both very interested in *The Beacon*. Father reads the stories to him, and works the puzzles with me. My brother and I would like to join the Beacon Club and have a pin. My letter is rather long for the letter corner, but if you put it there I could ask my friends to write too when I showed it to them.

Yours sincerely,

LARRY STEVENS.

STOW, MASS.

Dear Miss Buck—I go to the Unitarian Sunday school of Stow. My teacher's name is Miss Wetherbee. I work out most of the enigmas and like the hidden countries, etc. I am eleven years old, and am in the sixth grade at school.

I would like to join the Beacon Club.

Your friend,

FRANCIS W. WARREN.

SPRINGFIELD, MASS.,
36 Mattoon Street.

Dear Miss Buck—Having several friends who are members of the Beacon Club, I have decided I would like to become a member. I find a great many interesting stories in *The Beacon* and have great fun in solving the puzzles.

Yours sincerely,

DOROTHY KERSHAW.

CASTINE, ME.

Dear Miss Buck,—My name is Elizabeth Martyn. I am twelve years old. I go to the Unitarian Sunday school. I am in Miss Vescot's class. I am in the sixth grade at school. I would like to belong to the Beacon Club.

Love from

ELIZABETH MARTYN.

HUDSON, MASS.

Dear Miss Buck—I go to the Unitarian Sunday school. I am seven years old. I first went when I was three. I never miss a Sunday unless I am sick. One year I went to church and Sunday school every Sunday. The clock on our church was given by my great-great-grandfather. I would like to be a member of the Beacon Club.

Your little friend,

LILLIAN M. BRIGHAM.

ARLINGTON, MASS.

Dear Miss Buck—I go to the First Parish Unitarian Sunday School of Arlington. I enjoyed your coming out and speaking to our Sunday school last year. I went to Sunday school every Sunday last year, and got the book "King Arthur and His Knights." I am sending an enigma. I wish to become a member of your Club. May I?

Sincerely yours,

ETHEL WHYTEL.

RECREATION CORNER

ENIGMA LXIV.

I am composed of 52 letters, and form a quotation from Tennyson.

My 20, 46, 50, 33, is a Mexican laborer.

My 27, 11, 25, 44, 36, is strikes violently and noisily.

My 30, 15, 6, 49, 3, is to faint.

My 52, 45, 19, 21, 39, is clever.

My 48, 41, 24, 2, 9, is a disk of metal struck with a device.

My 8, 5, 43, 35, 18, is to touch slightly in passing.

My 29, 31, 13, 10, 38, is the subject of a famous poem.

My 26, 7, 23, 34, 17, 37, 32, 14, is the Christmas season.

My 40, 22, 42, 4, 47, 16, 28, 51, 12, 1, is pertaining to acting.

MARJORIE WARD,
in *St. Nicholas*.

ENIGMA LXV.

I am composed of 16 letters and am the name of an author.

My 1, 14, 15, 16, is part of a bird.

My 12, 2, 8, is a small animal.

My 3, 11, 10, is a bad deed.

My 7, 4, 9, 3, 8, is something some children are afraid of.

My 13, 2, 6, is used in moving.

My 8, 5, 15, is a metal.

ELEANOR KENNEDY.

FLOWERS DESCRIBED.

1. An animal and a part of dress.
2. A man and a part of dress.
3. A person and an article of dress.
4. A man's name and something to write with.
5. A color and an article found in almost every house.
6. A bird and an article used by a horseman.

Scattered Seeds.

WORD SQUARE.

1. To let fall.
2. Anger.
3. A wicked fairy.
4. A nobleman.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN NO. 27.

ENIGMA LX.—Theodore Parker.

ENIGMA LXI.—There are no birds in last year's nest.

HIDDEN DRESS GOODS.—Calico, gingham, cotton, serge, silk, satin, poplin.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC.—O I L S

S E E M

A U T O

K I C K

A I R Y

WELL-KNOWN MAGAZINES.—1. Cosmopolitan.

2. Harpers. 3. Black Cat. 4. Outing. 5. Outlook.

6. Everybody's. 7. Success. 8. Youth's Companion.

9. Century. 10. St. Nicholas.

CONUNDRUM.—Ohio (O-hi-o).

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